A REVIEW OF THE Affairs of *FRANCE*:

With Obſervations on TRANSACTIONS at Home.

Thurſday, July 5. 1705.

THEY who think my laſt Paper ſo meanly Deſign'd, and ſo inſignificantly Level'd, as to be pointed at the Author of the *Daily Courant*, do me much Injury, and have too mean an Opinion of the Deſign of this Paper.

The whole Intent of this Paper is Guided at and Directed to promoting and perſwading a General Union of Parties, a Peace of Neighbourhood and Charity; a Deſign ſo Noble in its Nature, ſo Neceſſary in its Circumſtances, ſo Seaſonable in its preſent Juncture, and which will certainly be ſo fatal in its Miſcarriage, that no *Engliſh* Man can be ſuppoſed to Decline it, without Declining the very common Character of a Man, much leſs an Honeſt Man, or a Lover of his Country.

A Deſign of ſo great Concern to *England*, that even the Queen her ſelf has not thought it below the Dignity of the Throne, to Attempt a Publick Exhortation, and Her Majeſty with a Concern ſuitable to the Conſtant Zeal, which on all Occaſions has appeared in Her moſt Exalted Conduct, has ſtoop'd to be a Preacher of Peace to all the Nation.

A Deſign, that in my Management of it, has but one Misfortune, *viz.* That it ſuffers from the Weakneſs of the Hand, who can at beſt but hold out a Light, but requires a Pilot of better Experience to Direct the Way.

In raiſing this Land Mark to Direct to the Bleſſed Haven of National Peace, I have plac'd Buoys and Marks upon the Dangerous Sands and Shoals, where the Ship of the State may be in danger of ſplitting, and where in our queſt of Peace, we are in danger of Shipwreck; and that part I am now upon, is the Miſchief of falſe Alarms, as they are cunningly made uſe of by the Enemy, to Amuſe and Abuſe us.

Giving Ear to the Empty Malice of Forg'd Stories, and the looſe Virulence of Flying Report, is an Evil to be Complain'd of, but to be Inſtrumental to the Forwarding, Spreading, and Legitimating theſe Stories, is an Iniquity to be Puniſh'd by the Judge, is a thing to be avoided careſully by every Ho-

neſt Man, and to be Diſcourag'd Diligently in others.

I have Treated of the Evil in General, I have two Circumſtances, among many other, which ſeem to come in my way to ſpeak to as known and Capital Examples, in which the Power, as well as Danger of this Malicious Method of raiſing Falſe Reports, and ſpreading Groundleſs, or ill grounded Rumours, will be ſo manifeſt, that I hope all Men will from hence draw the ſame Conſequences that I do, *viz.* That it is a Method every Man will both Avoid and Condemn, who has any regard to the Peace of *England*, and her Proſperity in the preſent Juncture of Affairs, whether of War, Confederacy, or Negoce. *Theſe are*,

1. A Report, That the Church of *England* is now in Danger.

2. A Report, That the *Scots* are in the Intereſt of *France*.

As theſe two Heads are very General, and contain more Particulars than are eaſily Enumerated, I claim to be underſtood not as the Various Humours of Men ſhall ſuggeſt, not as Men of Spleen and Parties ſhall ſuppoſe me to mean, but juſt as I Explain my ſelf, and as I ſhall at large lay it down.

Firſt, By a Report of the Church of *England*'s being in Danger, I profeſs to underſtand

That there is a Party of Men in *England*, who finding themſelves over Head and Ears, *as we ſay*, in a moſt abſurd Miſtake in Politicks, and that by their Violence, and Ridiculous Extreams, they have both ruin'd their Project, expoſed their Party, and Alarm'd the Nation———Have only one Game left to Play, and that is by raiſing an Out-cry of the Churche's Danger, ſeemingly juſtifie the Extraordinary Meaſures they were taking, and filling the People with the Amuſement, Improve it up to a Fright, and ſo run the Nation up to the ſame Degree of Lunacy with themſelves. From theſe Extravagancies, they hope to bring forth ſomething as Abſurd as they acted themſelves, and ſo at leaſt concern the more People to juſtifie their Proceedings, by acting worſe themſelves.

Thus Tacking, &c. has obtain'd upon the Ignorant People, becauſe being back'd with this Calculated Report of the Churches Danger, it might ſeem the more juſtifiable, at leaſt the Prudence of it might be Anſwer'd for, upon the ſame Ground, as Blowing up Houſes in caſe of Fire.

None blame the Miſchief, but 'tis Underſtood,
A Private Evil for a Publick Good.

2. By a Report of the *Scots* being in the Intereſt of *France*, I underſtand,

That there are ſome Men, who being very Deſirous of Embroiling the two Nations, a thing that would be much for the Intereſt of *France*, Maliciouſly Inſinuate and *Propagate ill Reports of* the Sinifter Deſigns of the *Scots* Nation againſt the Intereſt of *England*, Irritate the People on all Occaſions, and with Unwearied Diligence Animate the Nations one againſt another, as well there as here, and that this is done by Raiſing, Spreading, and Carrying about Ill Reports of the Reſpective Nations one againſt another, to Encreaſe the Animoſities, and as much as in them lies, to raiſe an Inveterate and Implacable Spirit on both Sides, and prevent all Poſſibility of Union and Underſtanding.

I ſhould be glad if either of theſe ſuggeſted Heads could be Denied, or Confuted ———And had I not ſeen the Fact ſo plain, the Ill Blood Diffuſed, and the Effects of it ſo Viſible, as that I think the Truth will each every Man's Judgment, touch his Senſes, and Convince him at firſt ſight, I ſhould not in laying down theſe Heads, be ſo Dogmatick, nor ſo poſitive in the Aſſertion.

So far therefore I'll venture to beg the Queſtion that *theſe Reports are ſpread about*, when I come to the Particulars, I'll endeavour to put it paſt Diſpute.

That the General Cries of the Churches Danger, is Induſtriouſly handed about amongſt all the High Party, that it is made the Excuſe, the Plea for all their Excentrick Motions, Heterodox Opinions, Diſloyal Reproaches of their Sovereign, Diſreſpectful Behaviour to their Dioceſans, and Exceeding Clamours at their Fellow Churchmen, that it

it is made the Shuttlecock of the Party, and is toss'd about from Pulpit to Pulpit, from one end of the Nation to the other, that it is made the *Blind Excuse* for an Occasional Bill, and [illegible] Bill to another, Sir *J*— *P*——*ton*, Sir *H*—— *M*——*th*, Mr. *B*—— *ly*, and all the Great Managers of the Conferences on that Head, are my Witnesses.

The Gentlemen have too much Honour to go back from what their Printed Debates have Inform'd us, and their Elaborate Speeches Declar'd.

But if they should let us refer to two Papers printed by the Highflying Clergy of the Diocese of *Exeter*, Entitled, *Reasons why the Clergy could not Comply with the Bishop's Recommendation* of Proctors to be Chosen for the Ensuing Convocation.

Where one of the principal Reasons for their Violent opposing the Bishop, their own Diocesan *is the Danger of the Church.*

And if the Gentlemen are not content with these Testimonies, that this is the present General Cry, the very *Watch Word of the Party*, the *Bugbear* to fright their Women, and quiet their Children, which I promise upon the Demand of any that will joyn Issue on the Question, to produce 150 Substantial Leading Men of the High Church, who either have Preached, Printed, or Promoted the Report, besides Dr. *B*——*ch*, *St*——*pe*, Mr. *Sach*——*ll*, Mr. *West*——*y*, *Cum multis aliis quæ nunc*, &c.

Well, (says a ready Objector) we allow that we do report the Church is in Danger, *and what then?* You are running on here, upon you know not what, you pretend to warn us against raising and promoting False Reports; and we joyn with you, That 'tis a Thing of ill consequence to do so, but so much the worse for *England*, and to our Sorrow we speak it, this is not a false Report.

This is far enough from a false Report, there's too much Truth in it to jest with, and you run on without any Rules, till ye prove that the Report of the Churches Danger, is a Groundless Rumour rais'd by the Enemy and Propagated with Design to raise and continue the Nations Divisions.

This indeed is a right way of Arguing, and I am very forward to joyn Issue upon this Head, and let the whole Debate turn upon this Head.

If therefore in the Process of these Papers, I do not prove, that this Noise of the Churches Danger is a Fiction, a meer *Party Cry*, a Chicane, an *Ignis fatuus*, raised on purpose to cover a Crime with a *Deceptio Visus*, and to lead the People into a second Error, that they may not Discern the first.

If I do not prove, That all the real Danger of the Church proceeds from the very Men that thus cry out first; that the Measures they are taking, are absolutely Destructive of the Churches Safety.

If I do not prove, That the promoting this General Report is fatal to the Nations Peace, assistant to the Enemies, and a visible propagating the Intereſt of *France*.

If I do not prove, That the Church of *England*, was never since the Time of Queen *Elizabeth*, so well fix'd, so secure, so safely Guarded, and so little Exposed to any possibility of an Insult at Home, or from Abroad.

If I do not prove, That these Reports and the Rumours of the Danger of the Church, are senceless Inconsistencies, Incongruous and Nonsensical, as compar'd with the Nature, Firmness, and Justice of the present Constitution.

If I do not prove, That these Reports are Calculated for the Overthrowing the present Settlement and Constitution both in Church and State.

If I say I do not make these things out, I do nothing; and on the other Hand, if I do, I hope it will be allow'd me, that the raising and spreading Groundless Reports to alarm the People, is an Artifice of the Enemy, is pernicious to the Publick, and a great Obstructor of that Peace which all Wise Men wish for.

ERRATA.

THe Mispointing the last Paper, has so marr'd the Sence, the Reader is Desired to observe the following Corrections.

P. 205. col. 2. l. 18. dele the Comma at *time*, and place it at *consider'd*; *ibid.* l. 19. after

after *or at*, read *least not at*; p. 207. col. 1. l. 15. dele the Comma at *ſpeaking*, and place it at *me*; *ibid.* l. 28. dele the Interrogation at *Hoarſe*, and place only a Comma there.

Juſt Publiſh'd,

THE *Appendix* to the *Review*; Together with an *Index* of the Firſt Volume; which will Compleat the ſaid Firſt Volume of the *Reviews*: And all thoſe Gentlemen, who have beſpoke of the Author, the ſaid Firſt Volume Entire, may have them Deliver'd, Bound up together with all the *Supplements*, at *J. Matthews*'s, or at the Publiſhers of the *Review*.

WHereas a Propoſal has been made by the Author of this Paper, for Subſcriptions to a Book in Folio, Entitled, *Jure Divino*; or, *A Satyr upon Tyranny and Paſſive Obedience*. To which, Abundance of Gentlemen having long ſince Subſcrib'd, and the Time ſeeming long for its coming out, ſome very Good Reaſons having obliged the Author to put a ſtop to it,

Theſe are to give Notice, That the ſaid Book is now in the Preſs, and ſhall go on to be Printed with all Expedition: And for the further Satisfaction of the Subſcribers, the Sheets may be ſeen every Day by any that pleaſe to give themſelves that Trouble, at Mr. *J. Matthews*, as they come out of the Preſs.

All thoſe Gentlemen, who have Collected Subſcriptions for this Book are Deſir'd to ſend in an Account of what Number they have taken, there being no more to be Printed, than ſhall be given Notice, as Subſcribed; and, if they pleaſe, to Pay the Subſcription Money to Mr. *Matthews* in *Pilkington Court*, *Little-Britain*, Receipts will be given there for it.

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